

Heart of the Neighborhood



Above: Residential estate in the Verde Hills neighborhood.

Introduction

The Huebner/Leon Creeks Community is comprised of some twenty distinct neighborhoods. Most of the neighborhoods have been developed over the last 25 years, however, several clusters of older housing exist in the Alamo Farmsteads and Verde Hills neighborhoods. These areas possess character defining features that make them potential candidates for Neighborhood Conservation Districts.

This chapter of the Community Plan focuses on the community's goals, objectives and action steps for promoting the character of the community and protecting its quality of life and include recommendations to managing growth and context sensitive street design.

This chapter also promotes improving communication between the City and the community, improving public policies pertaining to development, and forming a newsletter and an educational campaign.

Huebner/Leon Creeks Community Plan



A new neighborhood business on Bandera Road



A new home in Verde Hills

Timeline: Mid (3 to 5 years)

Lead Partner: Neighborhood Associations

Partnerships: COSA Planning—NCD program, COSA Development Services

Funding Sources: Minimal/Volunteer

Timeline: Short (1 to 2 years)

Lead Partner: Neighborhood Associations

Partnerships: Property owners

Funding Sources: Minimal/Volunteer

Timeline: Mid (3 to 5 years)

Lead Partner: Neighborhood Associations

Partnerships: COSA Planning—NCD program, COSA Development Services

Funding Sources: Minimal/Volunteer

Goal 1 – Community Character and Quality of Life

Preserve the character and quality of life of the Huebner/Leon Creeks Community.

Objective 1.1: Growth Management

Promote new commercial and residential development that is respectful of the primarily residential character of the area.

Action Steps:

- 1.1.1** Promote development that preserves trees and natural elements and respects the scale and proportion of the existing structures.
 - *Advocate to establish a root protection zone to be located at the dripline of trees.*
 - *Seek preservation of open spaces to protect trees.*
- 1.1.2** Seek independent “mom and pop” business to service the community.
- 1.1.3** Seek objective impervious cover standards for new development.

Heart of the Neighborhood

- 1.1.4** Promote individual character by developing design standards for new residential construction in an effort to reduce “cookie-cutter” development.

Timeline: Mid (3 to 5 years)

Lead Partner: Neighborhood Associations

Partners: COSA Planning—NCD program, COSA Development Services

Funding Sources: Minimal/Volunteer

- 1.1.5** Promote planting of native and water saving plants.
- *Tree planting, especially with non Live Oak species, to diversity urban forest in this community is recommended by the City Arborist.*



A house in Alamo Farmsteads

Objective 1.2: Street Design

Promote street designs in character with the area.

Action Steps:

- 1.2.1** Promote alternative designs with special character for pedestrian and bicycle paths.
- *Request winding, treelined sidewalks with green-strip rather than sidewalks next to the curb. (e.g. Wurzbach Parkway).*
 - *Maintain roads with rural character without curbs and sidewalks but with paths for walking or bicycle riding.*

Note: Curbs are often installed as part of drainage projects.

- 1.2.2** Advocate the design criteria desires of the Neighborhood Plan on new City improvements such as sidewalks and bridges to incorporate new, attractive, rural design.

Timeline: Short (1 to 2 years) to Mid (3 to 5 years)

Lead Partner: Neighborhood Associations

Partners: Property owners, SAWS, City Arborist



Wurzbach Parkway

Timeline: Mid (3 to 5 years)

Lead Partner: Neighborhood Associations

Partners: COSA Planning—NCD program, COSA Public Works, TxDOT

Funding Sources: Minimal/Volunteer

Timeline: Mid (3 to 5 years)

Lead Partners: Neighborhood Associations

Partners: COSA Planning—NCD program, COSA Public Works, TxDOT

Funding Sources: Minimal/Volunteer

Huebner/Leon Creeks Community Plan

Timeline: Mid (3 to 5 years)

Lead Partner: Neighborhood Associations

Partnerships: COSA Planning—NCD program, COSA Development Services

Funding Sources: Minimal/Volunteer



Many of the community's roads retain a rural feel.

Timeline: Mid (3 to 5 years)

Lead Partner: Neighborhood Associations

Partnerships: COSA Planning—NCD program, COSA Development Services

Funding Sources: Minimal/Volunteer

Timeline: Short (1 to 2 years) to Mid (3 to 5 years)

Lead Partner: Neighborhood Associations

Partnerships: COSA Planning—NCD program, COSA Development Services

Funding Sources: Minimal/Volunteer

Objective 1.3: Low Density

Maintain the low density development pattern.

1.3.1 Promote large lot, single family zoning (i.e. 20,000 square foot or one-acre minimum lot size) and large buffer yards between existing large lot single family developments and commercial uses through creation of a Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD).

- *A Neighborhood Conservation District is an overlay zoning district that contains design standards for new development. Property owners, together with Planning Department staff, develop the design standards. These standards can address architectural style and details, building height, driveways, curbs, sidewalks, landscaping, fences, etc.*

Objective 1.4: Neighborhood Conservation and Nodal Development

Seek techniques to maintain existing development patterns.

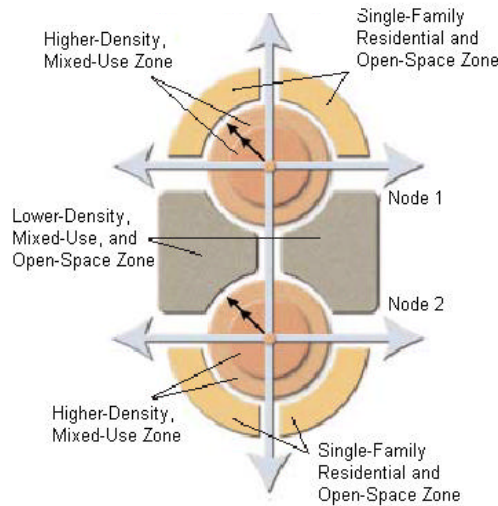
1.4.1 Seek techniques to limit new retail, office and multifamily development to the major thoroughfares that surround the Planning Area.

1.4.2 Maintain the existing nodal development pattern of Babcock Road by actively participating in the development process.

- *A node is a center of activity or development located at a major intersection.*

Heart of the Neighborhood

Image courtesy of Urban Land Institute, *Ten Principles for Reinventing America's Suburban Strips*.



An example of a house in Verde Hills

Goal 2 – Communication and Public Policy

Improve communication between neighbors and the City and develop a newsletter program.

Objective 2.1: Improve communication.

Improve communication between City Departments and the community.

Action Steps:

- 2.1.1** Seek change to state statutes to require replatting notification be forwarded to all owners of lots in the original plat and property owners within 200 feet of the property being replatted

Timeline: Mid (3 to 5 years)

Lead Partner: Neighborhood Associations

Partnerships: City Planning Department, Development Services Department, City Attorney's Office, Planning Commission, City Council representative, State Representative, External Relations

Funding Sources: Volunteer/Minimal

Objective 2.2: Public Policy

Balance economic development policy with sound environmental policy.

- 2.2.1** Monitor the development approval process to verify that existing rules are followed.
- *Encourage municipal and religious property owners to conform to the same rules that govern individuals (i.e. zoning, platting, etc.)*
 - *Enforce and strengthen current zoning and other development rules and policies through community education.*

Timeline: Short (1 to 2 years) to Long (6 + years)

Lead Partner: Neighborhood Associations

Partnerships: City Planning Department, Development Services Department, City Attorney's Office, Zoning Commission, City Council representative, State Representative

Funding Sources: Minimal/Volunteer

Huebner/Leon Creeks Community Plan



Neighborhood leaders participating in the Newsletter class offered by the Planning Department in 2001

Timeline: Short (1 to 2 years)

Lead Partner: Huebner/Leon Plan Implementation Committee

Partnerships: Neighborhood Associations, Neighborhood Resource Center, COSA Planning

Funding Sources: Advertising space within newsletter; Volunteer

Timeline: Short (1 to 2 years)

Lead Partner: Huebner/Leon Plan Implementation Committee

Partnerships: Neighborhood Associations, Neighborhood Resource Center, COSA Planning

Funding Sources: Minimal/Volunteer

Objective 2.3: Community Newsletter

Create a community newsletter and neighborhood association website.

Action Steps:

2.3.1 Create a community newsletter

- *Form a newsletter committee to ensure a minimum of semi-annual (twice per year) distribution to all residents of the planning area.*
- *Address concerns of citizens and provide more investigative reporting about how official decisions are made through newsletter articles.*
- *Provide information to all neighborhood associations and groups as well as city government and public agencies.*

2.3.2 Publish and post the rules/processes for land development on the City and neighborhood association internet websites.



Zoning maps and the Zoning Commission agenda can be found at Development Services' zoning webpage can be found at <http://www.sanantonio.gov/dsd/sections/zoning/index.asp>

Objective 2.4: Outreach and Education

Reach out to area residents and provide information on local government.

Action Steps:

2.4.1 Educate neighborhood property owners on their local and state representatives (i.e. City Council, Planning Commission, Zoning Commission) and how to communicate with them.

Timeline: Ongoing

Lead Partner: Huebner/Leon Plan Implementation Committee

Partnerships: Neighborhood Associations, Neighborhood Resource Center, COSA Planning

Funding Sources: Minimal/Volunteer

Heart of the Neighborhood

2.4.2 Coordinate a liaison based on small, manageable community units to distribute welcome/information packets to neighborhood newcomers.

Timeline: Short (1 to 2 years)

Lead Partner: Huebner/Leon Plan Implementation Committee

Partnerships: Neighborhood Associations

Funding Sources: Minimum/Volunteer



District 125 Representative Castro

2.4.3 Educate citizens of San Antonio regarding how the government works and how someone gets to serve on the City Council.

Timeline: Ongoing

Lead Partner: Huebner/Leon Implementation Committee

Partnerships: Neighborhood Associations

Funding Sources: Minimal/Volunteer



Neighbors and City staff share ideas during the Plan Writing Conference

2.4.4 Network with all of the other neighborhood associations in the planning area.

- *Reciprocate on newsletter content and distribution.*
- *Attend each other's neighborhood meetings as appropriate.*
- *Establish a contact person for all neighborhood associations in the planning area.*

Timeline: Short (1 to 2 years)

Lead Partner: Alamo Farmsteads/Babcock Road NA

Partnerships: Other Neighborhood Associations, Newspapers

Funding Sources: Volunteer/Minimal, Neighborhood Resource Center

Huebner/Leon Creeks Community Plan